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CPSC Calls for All Children to Learn to Swim in 2014, All Families to Take the *Pool Safely* Pledge

Latest data shows drowning remains leading cause of unintentional death for children ages 1-4

WASHINGTON, D.C. — New reports released today from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reveals that nearly 400 pool and spa drownings occur each year in the United States that involve children younger than 15 years old, with more than 75 percent involving children younger than 5. Government data also indicate that the majority of the fatalities involving children younger than 15 occurred at a residence, while residential locations also dominated incidents involving victims younger than 5 (50 percent for injuries and 85 percent for fatalities).

With these important tips in mind, [CPCS Pool Safely campaign](#) has launched the [Pool Safely Pledge](#), a checklist that adults can use to commit to a safe swim season. Specifically, the pledge calls for adults to:

- Designate a water watcher every single time children in their care are in or near the water;
- Make sure kids in their care know how to swim;
- Learn CPR; and
- Ensure that all pools have a proper fence, gate, and safe drain covers.

In addition to the adult pledge, CPSC has issued a *Pool Safely* pledge for children so that children can be involved in their own water safety. The kid pledge states that they will never swim alone, will ask their parents to sign them up for swimming lessons, and promise to stay away from drains in pools and hot tubs.

Memorial Day weekend represents the traditional start of the summer swim season, and once again, the [Pool Safely](#) campaign is focusing on populations most at risk of drowning:

- Children between the ages of 1 and 3 represent 67 percent of reported fatalities and 64 percent of injuries, according to CPSC.
- African American children between the ages of 5 and 19 are 5.5 times more likely to drown in pools than white children that age, according to the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- The disparity in swimming ability is greatest at 1112 years; at these ages, African American children drown in pools at 10 times the rate of white children, according to the CDC.

CPSC's 2014 [Pool and Spa Submersions: Estimated Injuries and Reported Fatalities Report](#) shows annual averages of:

- 390 pool- or spa-related drownings for children younger than 15, with 76 percent (296) of the victims being younger than 5;
- 4,900 pool- or spa-related emergency department-treated submersion injuries for children younger than 15, with 78 percent (4,000) of the injured being younger than 5.
- Residential locations dominated incidents involving victims younger than 5 years old; 85 percent of the fatalities occurred at residential pools or spas. About 47 percent of the injuries and 74 percent of the fatalities involving children younger than 15 years occurred at a residence.

- Of the reported pool fatalities for children younger than age 15, about 60 percent (226) occurred in in-ground pools; 17 percent of pool fatalities occurred in above-ground pools, and nearly 10 percent (35) of reported pool fatalities occurred in portable pools.

CPSC can once again report that there have been no known entrapment-related fatalities since the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act went into effect in December 2008. CPSC received only two reports of entrapment injury incidents during 2013. For the complete reports on entrapment-related fatalities see: [Pool and Spa Submersions 2014](#) (pdf) and [Circulation/Suction Entrapments 2014](#) (pdf). The years for reported injury and fatality statistics differ due to a lag in fatality reporting.

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Pool Safely, a national public education campaign supporting the requirements of Section 1407 of the [Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act](#), works with partners around the country to reduce child drownings, near-drownings submersions and entrapment incidents in swimming pools and spas. Parents, caregivers, and the media are encouraged to visit: [PoolSafely.gov](#) or [@PoolSafely](#) on Twitter for vital safety information regarding the prevention of child submersions in and around pools and spas.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death associated with the use of thousands of types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. Deaths, injuries, and property damage from consumer product incidents cost the nation more than \$1 trillion annually.

CPSC Consumer Information Hotline

Contact us at this toll-free number if you have questions about a recall:

800-638-2772 (TTY 301-595-7054)

Times: 8 a.m. 5:30 p.m. ET; Messages can be left anytime

Call to get product safety and other agency information and to report unsafe products.

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